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fession, instead of occasionally indulging in it as an amusement. Your resolution to paint portraits is to be commended; and let me impress upon you the importance of making a thorough study of this branch of art and of infusing into it those higher excellencies which belong to the great works of the best historical and poetic painters. Many young beginners imagine that they may paint portraits hurriedly and thoughtlessly for a few years, till they have made enough money to enable them to devote all their powers to high art. Meantime they despise and detest the labor of portrait-painting, which they pursue as a sort of slavery—now and then throwing off a composition of figures full of wretched clumsy painting, which they excuse by saying their time is so engrossed by manufacturing portraits, or “pot-boilers” as they are jocosely styled. Do not permit yourself to indulge any such delusive ideas. Resolve to be a *great portrait painter*, and when you have really become so—let me tell you, you will be a great artist and a great man. If you fancy that such a position is to be acquired easily in a short time, you are vastly mistaken. There is no greater mistake than to suppose portraiture is an easily acquired art and demands only second or third-rate abilities. There are no very fine portraits except by painters who were familiar with the principles of historical painting, and their portraits are among their best works. Remember the portrait of *Julius II.* by RAPHAEL; having once seen it, you can never forget the vivid impression its character makes on the brain. It will haunt you always as though you had seen him risen from the dead. Think of *TITIAN*’s portraits—their eyes read the soul; and *VANDYCK*’s—there is that manly dignity and nobleness about his *Cavaliers* which brook no insult.

It is a common thing to sneer at portraiture as a low branch of art—the constant pursuit of which is unworthy the ambition of a true artist.

“Is he anything more than a portrait painter?” is sometimes inquired in a contemptuous tone—and if nothing more can be said, the painter is thought to be a dull hum-drum fellow without a speck of invention. To be sure, the painter’s champion—some artistic lady, in whose album he has sketched with bold touches, and who has been immortalized by his pencil in the character of a Sibyl with red drapery in the historical style—or perhaps rigged out in the finery of an Italian peasant girl, and made a centre-piece at the academy exhibition,—will advocate his cause. “Oh, yes,” cries she to the romantic girl who has asked the question, “he paints *fancy pieces*—have you never seen his *Corinna*?—It was the most admired effort in the academy—it has the very expression of *RAPHAEL*’s *Fornarina*—I don’t know why he should have asked me to sit for it—though they tell me I have the Italian expression—the boddice was perfectly splendid, the richest coloring you ever saw—you ought to sit to him for a *St. Catharine*—you have such a pious character of face—his likenesses are not good—but then he *idealizes*—and that requires *genius*.” In this way every portrait painter who is afraid to trust to the truth and vigor of his pictures—rises to a fashionable reputation for taste and genius—by judicious flattery to the lady of a coterie.

If you have determined to paint chiefly portraits, and mean to attain a solid excellence in

this walk of art, allow me to suggest a few hints. Of the utmost importance in the outset is the habit of close and undivided attention to the object of study. Acquire the habit of thorough, patient, minutely careful observation of the matter you would represent. At first, your attention as a student will be directed to drawing in outline from engravings, then from fragments of the antique, and finally from life. As a means of habituating the eye and hand to the most perfect accuracy in drawing, you will find it useful to copy engraved outlines of a large size from hands, feet, head, etc., after the best drawings and studies of masters. Never leave a drawing once commenced—though it be but the outline of an eye—till you have carried it to the utmost perfection—and when finished, test the exactness of your imitation by measurement—by which means you will know where your mistakes lie. Never depend on actual measurement, while the drawing is in progress—but fix all proportions and distances by the eye.

If you once acquire the habit of unconquerable faithfulness in what you attempt, it will be of inestimable service in all your after efforts in art.

The first requisite to success (the original faculty being supposed) is the *power of perfect imitation*. On this all higher excellences are based. Many students in their lazy impatience despise close imitation and minute finishing—flattering themselves they are doing better and nobler by bold dashes at the general effect. They think it manly to splash the colors and shadows about the canvas—producing, by random hap-hazard bravado, a coarse effective resemblance to their model, which is after all crude and incorrect in all its parts. Whatever you draw or paint, while a student especially, make as *perfect as possible*—give yourself no anxiety about a free style of handling—it will follow of itself by experience.

In portraiture you will observe that all the higher excellencies depend on this basis for their perfect development, for no man can well judge what peculiarities in his model may be omitted, or to what extent he may soften, modify, or change the features of his sitter, unless he goes to his work with eye and hand so trained that he could if he chose set down all with the greatest truth and exactness. He must first be able to do this, and then, let him try experiments at idealizing.

All the qualities of a portrait are of course referable either to the sitter or painter, and again to the outward and inward, or physical and mental peculiarities of each.

The external qualities of the sitter are the first presented to view—and these, whether of feature, color, or posture—you may reproduce by a close imitation of lines, shades, and colors. Within this, however, lies the character, the soul of your sitter, not always so distinctly developed as that you may catch it, except by the faculty of arousing his attention, interesting and drawing out the mind, throwing him off his guard, and at happy moments when the mind is shining through the outward form, quickly catching and fixing the fleeting expressions on your canvas. To do this, requires the wits to be all awake, for you must give your mind, if it were possible, all to the conversation with your sitter, and all to the execution of your work, an attention passing quickly as lightning

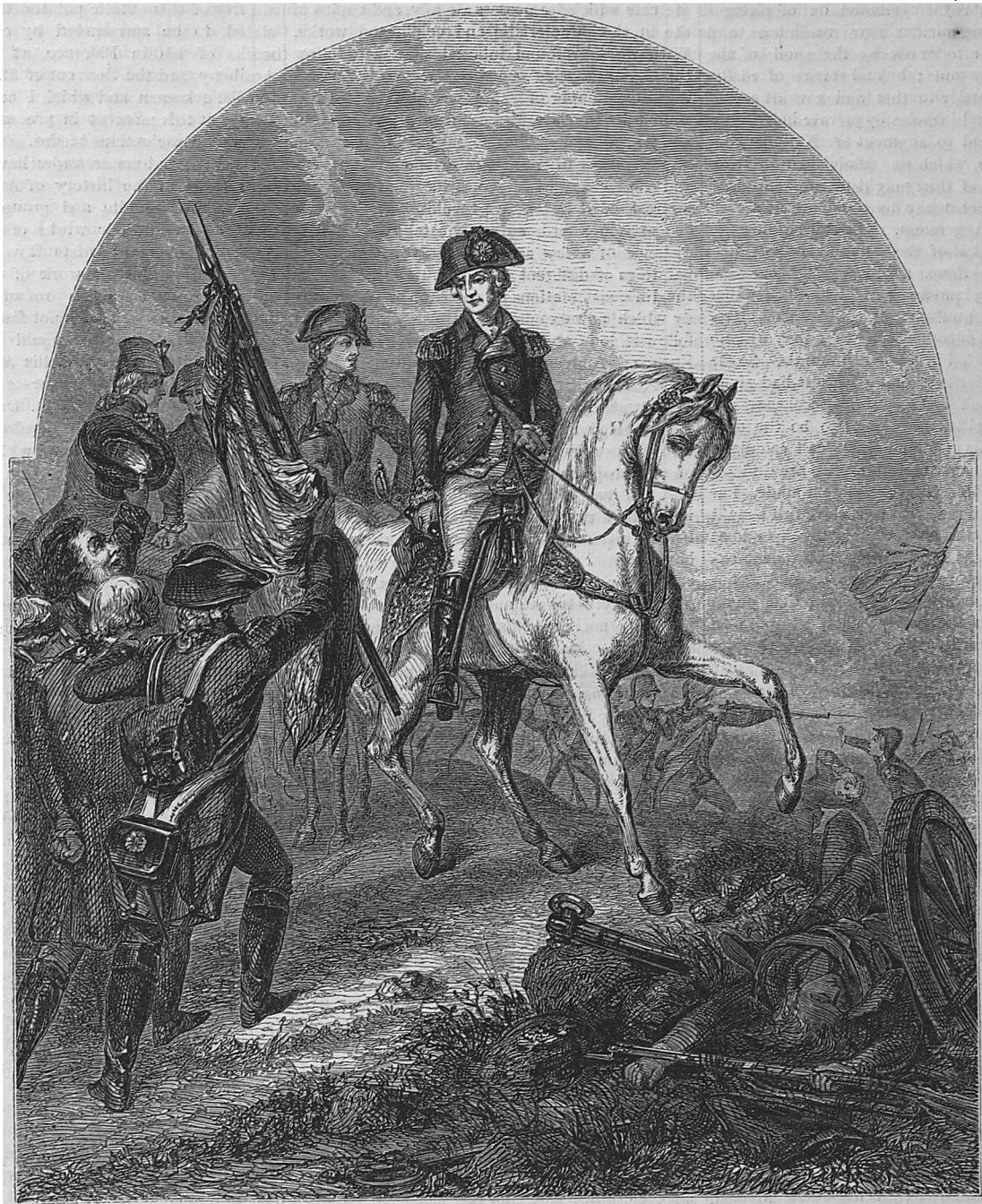
from one to the other, and the eye skillful, and hand rapid and dexterous, are all important.

When the finest traits of character are forcibly expressed in a portrait and combined with the graces of execution, a noble work of art is produced. Such portraits are among the most interesting works of the great masters of art. To fix for ever in imperishable color, the winning charms of lovely women has been always the great delight of portrait-painters. You will study to express, as did *RAPHAEL*, their modesty, gentleness, affection, purity. Or, when you find it (for possibly you may), to portray, as did *LELY*, their vanity, love of admiration, coquetry, alluring smiles, soft blandishments, and amorous glances—or like *VANDYCK*—you may look rather to perpetuate the courtly elegance of their carriage, the grace of manner, the calm matronly dignity, the mildness and unimpassioned suavity of high-bred refinement recommended by beauty of color, and richness and taste in costume.

At another time I will write, and enter more minutely into the principles of portrait-painting, and it may require several letters to explain at large my views on the subject. Give then your whole mind to it. Whatever you do in the way of preparatory study, let it be wrought out with the minutest perfection. Finish with the most exquisite delicacy the finger-nails of the cast of a hand you are now drawing from, and think it very important. By so doing you will lay a foundation for excellence and fame. H.

A MUSEUM OF COPIES.

[We translate the greater part of an article on this subject, lately published in the *Illustration*, by M. Dupays, the intelligent Fine-Art critic of that journal. It was suggested by recent changes in the arrangement of the Louvre Collection. Galleries intended to illustrate the complete history of art, and containing specimens of every celebrated painter, are not yet needed in this country. But a collection of copies of the master pieces of the different schools, would be a most valuable adjunct to our academies of design. All the reasoning in its favor in the following article applies with still greater force to this country, where we have no original specimens whatsoever. Why might not the principle of associated effort, which has effected so much in other enterprises, be applied also to this? Supposing the city of New-York should provide a gallery, in connection with the School of Design of the Free Academy, are there not numerous public bodies interested in literature and public education, which would each appropriate a few hundred dollars and contribute different works to the proposed collection, and are there not many individuals who would cheerfully do the same thing, particularly as they might, thereby, at small cost, acquire considerable fame and distinction? The only systematic attempt that we have heard of in the United States, to collect a museum of copies, is that now making by the Maryland Historical Society at Baltimore. They have already purchased a copy of *Raphael’s Madonna di San Sisto* and *Correggio’s Notte*, and commissioned one of *Paul Veronese’s Marriage at Cana*. At our last advices on this subject, the Committee had in view, for future orders, *Domenichino’s Communion of St. Jerome*, *Titian’s Peter Martyr*, and *Tintoretto’s Miracle*



WASHINGTON AT TRENTON.

Drawn by WALLIN, and engraved by BOBBETT & EDMONDS, from the original painting by WENDEROTH, which is to be included in the distribution of the American Art-Union for 1851.

of the Slave. The funds for these purchases are derived from annual exhibitions.]

The Museum of the Louvre has been closed for a long time in order to be restored and embellished. Now that it is about to be reopened, with improved light, and more convenient arrangements, we think it our duty to call public attention to the utility of giving to it what we consider an indispensable addition—that is to say, a museum of copies, which may fill the numerous blanks in its collections, communicate to them that universality which is one of the traits of our national character, and seems also to have been aimed at in the formation of the

Museum itself—and, in fine, become a powerful auxiliary in the study of the Fine Arts, not only for Paris, but for the departments.

The chief merit of a grand gallery of paintings should consist in its forming a complete series in which the principal masters of every school and every epoch should be honorably represented, and in a way to exhibit their peculiar talents. It is evident that such a collection, even if it did not contain works of transcendent excellence, would be much more interesting and instructive than certain restricted museums, like those of Bologna and the Vatican, resplendent as they are with admirable chefs-d'œuvre. Our

Museum of the Louvre is, by its variety, better able than any other to give a synthetic idea of the different schools of painting. The French school, and those of Germany, Flanders, Holland, and Italy, are each represented by about five hundred pictures. The Spanish school lately completed the series: its restoration to the heirs of Louis Philippe leaves a void much to be regretted, in spite of the feeble quality of the works of which it was generally composed.

In our days great and sudden additions to museums must become more and more rare. It is true, that at a date as recent as 1828, one of the finest collections of Europe, that at Madrid,

was formed by royal command, out of pictures scattered among-various royal residences, and was enriched afterwards by the spoils of the abolition of convents; but all this required the peculiar political situation and revolutions of Spain. Gifts and legacies by private individuals have contributed to augment the National Gallery of London, which was established in 1824, with a nucleus of thirty-eight pictures purchased by the government after the death of a rich amateur, Mr. Angerstein. The sales of fine collections, like that of the King of Holland, dispersed a year since, afford another occasion equally rare for increasing great national galleries. As to the outrageous robberies of victorious armies, it is to be hoped that they will no longer be tolerated in European morals. So far as we are concerned, what conquest had given us, invasion took back again. Purchases, exchanges, and gifts, then, seem to be the only sources in our days on which we can calculate. Such exchanges as would be useful, are difficult and impracticable. Gifts are seldom made. Important sales are rare, and to receive full benefit of them, it would be necessary to expend, at short notice, sums much larger than we can expect from the severe parsimony of legislative bodies. It is certainly to be desired, that, on an unique occasion, the budget should impose on itself an extraordinary sacrifice, because pictures once fallen within the domain of a great public museum, are forever withdrawn from circulation, and become immovable as the property of the nation. It is thus the floating fund of pictures daily diminishes. In a given time all the great public museums will have absorbed all the fine private collections. Heaven grant that the Museum of the Louvre may have a fair share of what remains to be gleaned! but whatever this share may be, there will always be blanks which it will be impossible to fill, excepting by copies. We do not understand why steps have not been taken in this direction long ago. We cannot explain it, unless by the exaggerated ideas of the inferiority and insufficiency of copies. Nevertheless, a considerable number of celebrated European pictures are no other than duplicates, executed under the eyes of the masters, or else copies made after the originals, without taking into the account the fact, that some artists (and we will cite Luca Giordano and the brothers Gennari) have often succeeded in appropriating the manner of other painters, so as to produce pasticcios which have been sold under distinguished names. Without attempting to decry in any way the merit of originals, which would be puerile and ridiculous, we may justly consider it as established, that a well-executed copy, in the largest point of view, is equally useful for the study of Art and of its history. It is true, that pictures in which the freedom, the glow, or the spiritual vivacity of the touch constitute the peculiar merit, are difficult to be copied. But, fortunately, that seeking after "touch" is not apparent in most of the great masters of the Italian school, and they are the masters in particular whose reproduction is desirable. We would transport the grand traditions of Italian art living amongst us. The end proposed should be to complete the Museum, by forming a chronological series of the schools from their Byzantine origin and the birth of Italian art, in the 13th century, down to its decline; the different schools to be represented by

pictures which we possess already, and copies of the most characteristic and celebrated works. With what profound interest should we follow this series, passing successively from the paintings in distemper of Pantelinos of Mount Athos, copied by the late Papety, from those of Cimabue, of Giotto, and of Orcagna, down to the master-pieces of the great artists of the 15th and 16th century! Beyond its great historical interest, what instructive revelations would this comparison afford, so easily established at the distance of a few steps not only between the paintings of different epochs, but also between the different creations of the same artist! a study which now exacts from those who wish to follow it, long and expensive journeys over all Europe. And even then what do they bring back? a fugitive impression intrusted to the memory, and of which the imprint is daily wearing out. How invaluable would be the concentration that we propose in the place of this system of scattered observation!

A museum of copies would make us familiar with many great artists entirely unknown in France, although their names, too glorious not to have arrived here, are often repeated. It is enough for us to cite Masaccio, the precursor and prototype of Raphael, and of whom our Museum possesses nothing. Ought not a copy of his admirable composition in the Church of the Carmine at Florence to have appeared there a long time since, as well as one of Filippo Lippi's equally remarkable works, which faces the Masaccio in the same chapel? These magnificent monuments, which mark with so much *éclat* the History of Art, should be as popular as Raphael's *School of Athens*. Besides, these monuments are perishing daily. The Sacristans value them in proportion to the fees paid by the visitors they attract. Otherwise they are irreverent iconoclasts, so far as we could judge, some months since, from seeing the carelessness with which they rested their ladders against these venerable paintings in order to light or to extinguish the lamps, an operation repeated many times a day. Without speaking of carelessness, the action of time must, in a certain number of years, inevitably bring about the destruction of the walls that support these paintings, and this is another reason for preserving copies of them in our Museums.*

What we said of Masaccio who does not figure in the Catalogue of our Museum, we will say also of Giotto, whose name is found there, to be sure, but of whom one can gather but a very insufficient idea from the single and mediocre specimen we possess. It is at Assisi that an able copyist should go to study him, in order to bring back to us the fine frescoes of the Restorer of painting. We would say the same thing of Fra Angelico, whose *Coronation of the Virgin*, placed at the Louvre in the Gallery of Drawings, ought to be brought back to those of paintings, and ought also, in order that all the

* Sometimes these causes of alteration act with great rapidity. Within an interval of a few years I have been sorry to observe the progress they have made upon a chef-d'œuvre of Andrea del Sarto—the fresco of the *Madonna del Sacco*, at the Convent of the Servites of Florence. The head of *St. Joseph*, which was still visible a few years ago, is now almost entirely effaced. The vault which covers this fresco is filled with leaks that extend to the side of the painting. The monks, I was told, are unwilling to go to the expense of making repairs. The Tuscan Government should take upon itself the costs of the preservation of this master-piece.

suavity of this extatic painter should be appreciated, to be surrounded by copies of many works of his in Florence, at the Uffizi, the Academy, and the Convent of St. Mark—works too little known, and which Florentine engravers are at this moment in process of reproducing with conscientious burins.

For the great masters who have left a luminous track in the history of Art, it would be desirable to reunite and group together the greater part of their works of the first class. As to the secondary artists, it would be enough to have the principal work of each, and that which characterizes his manner. Thus Sodoma, whose name also is not found in the Catalogue of the Louvre, would be sufficiently represented by a copy of his *Swooning of St. Catharine*, which all travellers go to admire at Sienna, in the Church of St. Dominick. Certain great labors would require to be reproduced in their entirety, and with their proper arrangement. Thus the ceiling of one of the present or future galleries of the Louvre might be devoted to the fine paintings of Annibal Carracci in the Farnese Palace at Rome. This poetic decoration, borrowed from the Past, would be some recompense for the mediocre ceiling paintings of modern times which disfigure many halls of the Museum.

The Administration of the Fine Arts seem to have taken steps already in this path by commissioning the brothers Balze to copy the *Stanza* of Raphael. The Administration, in fact, ought already to have in its possession a certain number of well-executed copies after the most celebrated paintings of Italy. But it does not appear that it has yet digested a plan in relation to this. What becomes, then, of all the copies executed by the pupils who obtain the *prix de Rome*,* and by that crowd of artists whom one is sure to meet always in the different museums of Italy, grouped in swarms around the masterpieces, and preventing spectators from approaching them?

It is time to think about regulating this employment of the copyist, and making it an intelligent occupation. The pupils of the French Academy should naturally be called upon to compete in this enterprise in some orderly and regular manner. Some chosen artists should be charged with special missions for the different collections of Europe. The talent of making exact copies, which requires a special aptitude, would be for a certain number of painters, who are now without commissions, a means of existence, if not brilliant, at least sure. Governmental encouragement might become something more than a sterile favor. We should no longer be condemned to store wretched pictures, bought to-day for the relief of the artist, and destined to be burned to-morrow for the relief of Art. A good copy is worth a hundred times more than a poor original. This devotion to the reproduction of others' works would also have its stimulus of emulation and its recompense. It would be necessary to keep a strict watch upon the exactness of the copies: for a bad copy is more wretched even than a bad original. It is hateful, first, because it is a bad thing in itself; and secondly, because it is a

* The right, given to the most meritorious competitors, of studying in the French Academy at Rome, which is supported by the Government at home.

lie—a treason. *Traduttore traditore*. In every city whither artists should be sent to copy any master-piece, it would be proper to form a jury of examination, composed of a sufficient number of persons to secure an impartial decision. This jury would affix its true value to every copy submitted to them with the more exactness, from the fact that they could place copy and original side by side. Perhaps it would be well to apply to this estimate a combination similar to that of De Piles's *Balance of Painters*, expressing, by figures, from zero to 10, for instance, the degrees of exactness and approximation to the model. These figures would serve to class different copies of the same picture made at different epochs.

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Would that we might see united at the Louvre copies of the master-pieces we have had the privilege of admiring at different times in Italy and Germany! Would that we might thus find the *Titans* of Giulio Romano (from the Palace of T at Mantua), at a few steps distant from the *Damned* of Rubens, (from the Pinakothek of Munich)! that we might turn from the *Prophets* of Michael Angelo, to the *Evangelists* of Albert Durer (Munich), and of Fra Bartholomeo (Pitti Palace)! that we might contemplate alternately the head of *Joconde* at the Louvre, by Leonardo da Vinci, and his figures of *Modesty* and *Vanity*, from the Sciarra Palace (Rome), the *Madonna della Seggiola* and the *Belle Jardiniere* of Raphael! that we might compare with each other the ascetic pictures of Fra Angelico and Hemling—study in curious proximity the *Last Supper* of Leonardo da Vinci (Milan), that attributed to Raphael, and recently discovered at Florence, and that of Ghirlandajo, from the refectory of the Dominicans of the same city! There is nobody, having a taste for the arts, who does not feel all the value and charm of such comparative studies. We are fully persuaded ourselves of the utility that would be added to our Museum if it should be completed by means of exact copies, so as to facilitate these interesting and productive studies. We have a lively desire that the project here advanced of having a MUSEUM OF COPIES should be taken into consideration by the Administration, or examined and fortified by a voice more authoritative than ours, in order to insure its success.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE BULLETIN.

RUSKIN AND THE PRE-RAFFAELITES.

To the Editor of the Art-Union Bulletin.

DEAR SIR:—Having introduced into your columns the discussion now going on between Ruskin and the London critics, with regard to the P. R. B. you will doubtless be pleased to give place to a vindication of him from the charge of *inconsistency* laid upon him, with as much zeal, as stupidity by his opponents. It is a matter well known, probably, to your readers, that between Ruskin and that portion of the critical profession which is represented by the writers for the *Times*, *Athenæum*, &c., there is open hostility, or at least such hostility as can exist between a great man strong in the truth, and conscious of his strength; and the snarling cynics who neglect no occasion to pit themselves against him. That they should dislike and oppose him is very reasonable, for could he per-

sue the English public of so absurd a thing as that any study, farther than going the rounds of the National and Dulwich galleries, is necessary to fit one to be a guide of public taste, a dispenser of the awards of merit to struggling talent, "Othello's occupation's gone." That their absurd fulminations disturb him, few will believe who know his earnest spirit and how much of the best talent of England is gathered around him, holding like faith and hope.

Ruskin's position with regard to the P. R. B. has called out anew the bitterest hostility, and derision of his enemies. Some little explanation may assist a portion of your readers to a better understanding of the matter in dispute. The P. R. B. or Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is an association of young artists, so calling themselves on account of a belief they entertain, that in order to attain to the dignity and grace of Raffaele and his successors, it is necessary to go back to the same discipline and course of study which Raffaele pursued, and received from the early religious painters of Italy. These views are identical with, and probably derived from, the purist school of Germany, and first introduced into England by Herbert. In accordance with their persuasion, they threw aside the more sensual characteristics of art, and devoted themselves to the most earnest study of the smallest details of their pictures, rightly judging that to attain perfection of the whole they must begin at perfection of the parts. The result was a hardness and dryness, a lineal quality in their pictures, and an absence of executive vigor, which was of course little liked by the English public. Criticism was harsh, and it is likely that a band of young, enthusiastic, artists, suffering, as they thought, a kind of persecution on account of a principle, should become ultra in their views and tendencies on account of that persecution. According to the workings of human nature in such cases, they rather cultivated than discouraged that dryness in their works, in bravado to a judgment which they felt to be unjust. Their pictures are noted for a remarkable faithfulness of portraiture in the accessories, and it was for this characteristic that Ruskin praised them, and for which approbation he is so attacked by his critics.

But let us see why Mr. Ruskin makes this a subject of praise, and then examine the charge of the inconsistency of this with his former views. They who have studied Ruskin's works, will know how great a value he places on the element of love in art as compared to power, and will understand that it is the display of that quality which especially merited his, as well as all earnest men's commendation, as well as the determined rejection of all conventionalisms by the P. R. B. It is this earnest love of even the trifles so called of their work, that gives him hope of their attaining to great results; judging that minds thus prepared in their elementary studies, will be better fitted for the advance to the higher, than those who have sought velocity without decision, and facility without aim, through their early study. It is not so much their achievements as their promise—their works as the temper in which they wrought—of which he has declared his approval. It is that, lovingly and affectionately, they have set to work at those things which less earnest men have despised and neglected, in the hope that as their power and experience increase, they

may attain to that same fidelity of representation of things, nobler, and even better worth their thought. Is there anything inconsistent or foolish in such a hope? If there be, Ruskin is not alone in it. One of the deepest minded artists in England declared to the writer his opinion, that if English historical art ever attained to greatness, it would be through that very school.

And now, as to the charge of inconsistency. Let us collate some passages from his works and examine their tendency. "The higher the mind, it may be taken as a universal rule, the less it will scorn that which appears to be small and unimportant; and the rank of a painter may always be determined by observing how he uses, and with what respect he views, the minutiae of nature. Greatness of mind is not shown by admitting small things, but by making small things great under its influence. He who can take no interest in what is small will take no interest in what is great; he who cannot make a bank sublime will make a mountain ridiculous." *Mod. Painters*, Vol. I, P. 2, Ch. IV. §28. Farther, in speaking of the great masters of art he instances the greatest examples in favor of the very course to which the P. R. B. are tending. "The great masters of Italy, almost without an exception, and Titian perhaps more than any (for he had the highest knowledge of landscape), are in the constant habit of rendering every detail of their foregrounds with the most laborious botanical fidelity: witness the "Bacchus and Ariadne," in which the foreground is occupied by the common blue iris, the aquilegia, and the wild rose; every stamen of which latter is given while the blossoms and leaves of the columbine (a difficult flower to draw) have been studied with the most exquisite accuracy. The foregrounds of Raffaele's two cartoons—"The Miraculous Draught of Fishes" and "The Charge to Peter"—are covered with plants of the common sea colewort (*crambe maritima*), of which the sinuated leaves and clustered blossoms would have exhausted the patience of any other artist, but have appeared worthy of prolonged and thoughtful labor to the great mind of Raffaele." *Pref. to Ind. Ed.* p. 28. Another passage from the same preface bears more directly on the point in question. After alluding to the manner in which the powerful artist treats details, he observes: "Thus, frequently to the latest period of his life, like Sir Joshua, he separates, as chief enemies, the details and the whole, which an artist cannot be great unless he reconciles; and because details alone, and unreferred to a final purpose, are the sign of a tyro's work, he loses sight of the remoter truth that details perfect in unity, and contributing to a final purpose, are the sign of the production of a consummate master.

"It is not therefore detail sought for its own sake—not the calculable bricks of the Dutch house-painters—not the numbered hairs and mapped wrinkles of Denner—which constitute great art—they are the lowest and most contemptible art; but it is detail referred to a great end—sought for the sake of the inestimable beauty which exists in the slightest and least of God's works, and treated in a manly, broad, and impressive manner."

This is the treatment resultant from the feeling of the P. R. B., and, though it may be that there is much affectation among them—some weak men who are led by their vanity and de-